



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
**MICHIGAN BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH  
DAVID C. HOLLISTER, DIRECTOR

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VICE PRESIDENT

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**Governor's Rural Broadband Initiative Launched**  
*Broadband Service Providers Urged to Submit Proposals*

Lansing — In response to Governor Jennifer M. Granholm's charge to expand affordable broadband access through out all of the state by 2007, the Michigan Broadband Development Authority (MBDA) today announced they are seeking financing applications to expand such services into the state's most rural and underserved regions. In eligible regions, qualifying broadband providers may receive 4 percent loans with interest-only draw periods of up to 24 months. Providers will work with local government and economic development organizations to qualify their proposals.

"Making affordable broadband access available to residents, public entities, and businesses across the state will make Michigan more competitive in today's 21<sup>st</sup> century economy," Granholm said.

"This targeted effort will help us to accomplish our goal of expanding these services to the entire state by 2007."

The State is encouraging regional leaders to creatively utilize this solicitation to attract more broadband investment into their regions. Schools, government offices and other large users of high-speed Internet services in underserved regions are being encouraged to leverage community-wide access by serving as anchor tenants for providers willing to expand services through out their area. It is hoped these entities will partner with providers to lower the cost of such infrastructure, by providing access to towers and other structures to support community-wide deployment.

"There is no one technology or broadband investment strategy that can be applied to each region of the state," said Teri Takai, director of the Department of Information Technology. "We expect strategies to differ widely based on geography and location, but the key will be innovative partnerships.

This program is intended to support and encourage such innovation."

"We have created what we consider to be a tremendous incentive package for service providers," said James W. Butler, III, executive vice president of the MBDA. "By lowering our interest rate to 4 percent and concentrating our efforts on the parts of the state that do not currently have widely available access, we are in a strong position to move the state toward its universal coverage goal by the end of 2007."

Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG) Director David C. Hollister said, "While much broadband investment has taken place in Michigan's more populated regions and the MBDA has helped impact service and affordability in more than 300 cities, this focused effort makes rural and underserved regions the priority of the Authority. This is a positive new step to build upon the successes of the MBDA."

To download the RFP visit: [www.broadbandauthority.org](http://www.broadbandauthority.org)

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